

WEEKLY RADIO REPORT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC) JUNE 9, 1955.

Mr. Coar -- Senator Thurmond, what do you think was the major legislative action taken by the Senate this past week?

SENATOR THURMOND -- The major items acted on by the Senate during this past week were the housing and minimum wage bills. Both were passed rather swiftly -- much to the surprise of everyone. The Housing bill was passed Tuesday after only several hours of debate, and the bill increasing the minimum wage from 75 cents to one dollar was approved within an hour and a half on Wednesday.

MR. COAR -- How did you vote on the Housing bill, Senator?

SENATOR THURMOND -- I voted against passage, Bob, because I am opposed to a further extension and expansion of public housing at this time. As passed, the bill authorized 135,000 public housing units for the fiscal year 1956. One sponsor of this measure remarked on the Senate floor shortly after passage/that this legislation would involve the government to the extent of 10 billion dollars. Another prominent legislator/estimated it would run even higher than that enormous figure. I voted against the bill, also, because I believe that private enterprise can do, and is doing, the housing job necessary. In addition to these reasons, I opposed the bill because the Supreme Court has indicated that the separate-but-equal doctrine/in regard to segregation in public education and public housing/will no longer be respected. As you no doubt remember, my distinguished

predecessor, the late Senator Burnet Maybank, who was an advocate of public housing, reversed his position last year and moved to strike his own amendment increasing public housing/for this same reason.

MR. COAR -- As a long-time friend of the ^{working}~~little~~ man, I believe you voted for the minimum wage bill, isn't that correct, Senator?

SENATOR THURMOND --That's right, Bob. I voted for the increase to one dollar/because the cost of living index has risen by a similar proportion to the 25 cents per hour increase/since the 75 cents law was passed in 1950. As you know, Bob, this bill applies only to those persons working in occupations that affect interstate commerce. Also, this bill did not extend any additional coverage under the Fair Labor Standards Act. ~~I understand that may come up for consideration next year.~~

MR. COAR -- Senator, what are your views in regard to the Administration's reserve training bill that is currently bottled up in the House. As national president of the Reserve Officers Association/and a brigadier general in the Army Reserve, I imagine you have a strong opinion on this matter.

SENATOR THURMOND -- I agree wholeheartedly/with what the President said at his news conference Wednesday. At that time/he called for prompt and favorable action on the reserve bill/and virtually denounced Congressman Adam Clayton Powell's^{sk} anti-segregation amendment which has stalled the measure. I was glad to hear the President take such a strong position in this regard.

I believe that we must build up a strong combat-ready reserve, and this can only be done by passage of the administration's reserve program. I met with President Eisenhower and leaders of the American Legion, the VFW, and several other veterans organizations at the White House last week/^{we} and urged that the President take a strong position against the Powell anti-segregation amendment.

MR. COAR---Senator, I understand you made ~~the~~ quite a few news headlines Friday/with a speech you made before the American Bar Association in Cincinnati/in which you called for open meetings at the Big Four conference in July.

SEN. THURMOND---Yes, Bob, I advocated meetings open to the press and all news media/because I am convinced we have gained nothing by secrecy/in dealing with the Communists in the past. In fact, I believe we have lost prestige. Little nations have suspected and accused the large nations of having no interest but self-interest. As you know, we are still arguing over the results of some such conferences. If you remember, too, President Wilson, in his Fourteen Points, called first/for "open covenants, openly arrived at." History should have taught us that had we always followed this policy, we would not have been so vulnerable to the propaganda attacks of our enemies. Military security is the only justification for secrecy, and military security is not a consideration at the Big Four meetings. Russia will know all that is said and done. The world should know. If Russia dooms the conference to failure,

~~the~~ world should have no doubt/as to where the responsibility lies.

(In my speech/I reviewed some of the numerous promises the Communists have broken in their agreements with us, since we recognized ~~the~~ Russian Red government in 1933. For this reason, I urged the utmost caution in dealing with the Reds / and in our optimism toward expecting too much. I believe we should expect little /and be grateful for any small successes attained.)

In closing, Bob, I would like to say that I've had some requests for copies of my speech. Copies are available at ⁱⁿ my office, and I will be glad to forward a copy to anyone who is interested.

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